



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Joseph M. Sawyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

May 8, 2015

To: School Committee
From: Joe Sawyer
Re: Tuition & Fees in Fiscal Year 2016

The priorities and guidelines for the development of the Fiscal Year 2016 School Department Budget that the School Committee issued in October 2015 (enclosed) indicated that the budget should be developed with an assumption that there would not be an increase in the current fee levels. The budget recommendation the Committee recently made to Town Meeting assumes not only that fees will remain at current levels, but that other charges such as tuitions will also remain at the same rate.

The budget recommendation for next year will allow the district to maintain the existing educational program while also making a small number of additional staff to address mandates both directly and indirectly, and while only requiring an additional 2.2% of town appropriated dollars.

Given that parents, as taxpayers, are subject to the impact of the tax levy increase of 2.5% that helps to fund the town's appropriation and that parents are required to pay a variety of tuitions and fees to offset the cost of the school district's operations (see enclosed list), I concur with the School Committee's initial guideline not to increase the cost of these obligations, which often run well beyond \$1,000 for certain families, and our projections indicate that current fee and tuition levels will be sufficient to execute next year's budget plan. I also do not recommend adjusting any user fees for outside groups such as for rental of school facilities, as this rate was adjusted recently to cover inflationary costs.

There is only one element of our operations where an adjustment is likely to be recommended, and that is the cost of school meals. The Food Service program is a self-sustaining program that is being affected by the rising cost of food and of healthcare. A report on the Food Service Department's finances will be made at an upcoming meeting, and a recommendation for increasing the cost of school meals is likely to be made at that time.

Keeping current levels of tuition and fees does not require any action on the part of the Committee, and I recommend no action at this time. I look forward to discussing this with you at your meeting on May 13.